Incentive News

Reminders:

Should you need to research information regarding TennCare's EHR Incentive program, information will continue to be available for a limited time at the TennCare EHR Incentive website.

This is the final issue of the *TennCare EHR Incentive News*. TennCare's EHR Provider Incentive Payment Program sunset on Dec. 31, 2021. Thanks to all providers who participated.

Can We Help?

If you have lingering questions about the EHR Incentive Program, our email box will remain open for a limited time only. When emailing, please include your provider's name(s) and NPI(s).

EHR Incentive Attestation Audits Set to Continue Over Next Several Months

Although the Division of TennCare's EHR Incentive Payment Program sunset on Dec. 31, 2021, the division auditors' review of the program will continue over the next several months. When the program began, TennCare was required by CMS to ensure its integrity and effectiveness through both prepayment verification and post-payment audits of provider attestations. This includes the provider's, or the attesting person's affirmation that the attestation is true, accurate, and complete, to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

TennCare's Audit & Investigations unit contracts with the public accounting firm Myers and Stauffer LC to perform these post-payment audits. Although the vendor assumes the responsibility for performing such audits, the audits are conducted under TennCare's oversight.

Providers/Hospitals who have been randomly selected for post-payment audits will be contacted from employees of Myers and Stauffer. The notices will be sent from the domain "mslc.com". To ensure that you receive audit communications from Myers and Stauffer, please add mslc.com to your email client's list of accepted or safe senders/recipients.
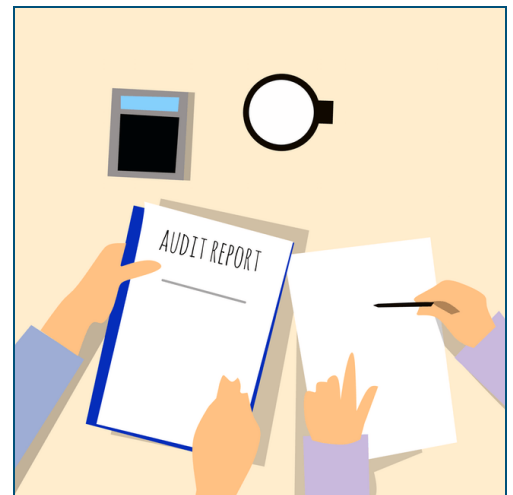
Information collected will be held in strict confidence in compliance with all applicable policies, requirements, regulations, and statutes. Myers and Stauffer has safeguards to prevent use or disclosure of information obtained during the course of the engagement. Myers and Stauffer will report the results of their work to TennCare.

Failure to cooperate with Myers and Stauffer may result in recovery of some or all of the EHR incentive payment.

Should you wish to appeal an audit finding, you MUST send the appeal to InternalAudit.TennCare@tn.gov, within the time frame stated in your

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Do You Have Questions Remaining About

The EHR Incentive Program?

Past attestations?

Your Future with Electronic Heath Records?

Email TennCare. EHRIncentive @tn.gov

Always include the Provider's Name and NPI when communicating with TennCare.

EHR Incentive Attestation Audits Set to Continue Over Next Several Months...

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notification letter. Appeals sent to any other TennCare mailbox may be missed and/or denied as an untimely appeal. Do not appeal using the email address TennCare.EHRIncentive@tn.gov as that mailbox is also not for appealing audit findings.

If you have any questions regarding Medicaid EHR post-payment audits, please email InternalAudit.TennCare@tn.gov.

Avoid Possible Audit Headaches — File Past Documentation Now

So you've heard the EHR Incentive has ended and you are now looking at that leftover stack of documentation. Maybe you're tempted to discard the that pile of paper-stuffed folders.

Don't do it!

Now that the EHR Incentive program has sunset, make sure your attestation documentation is properly stored! Don't put it aside, don't leave it on that untouched stack of papers on your desk. Don't

stick it in the recycle bin and don't throw it in the trash. Don't do anything that might mean there's even the slightest chance you'll never see it again.

Always file any and all previous attestation documentation with your long-term records. In light of the possibility of a post-payment audit, providers are required to retain documentation in support of all attestations for no fewer than six years after each payment year.

All incentive payments received by a provider are subject to this type of audit.

Because a provider can be asked to show documentation to support any of the information for his/her attestations, from any year for which an EHR incentive was received, you don't want to be caught lacking! If sufficient documentation is not produced, the provider may be determined ineligible for the payment.

The requirement to retain documentation to support all attestations for a minimum of six years after each payment year is noted on the Signature Page that each provider signed for each attestation.

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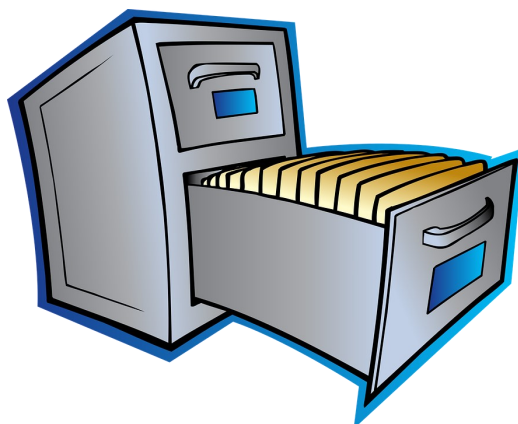
Receive One or More EHR Incentive Payments During 2021? Make Sure You Received a 1099 Too!

If you are an eligible professional (EP) and received one or more EHR Incentive payments during calendar year 2021, you also should have received a matching 1099-MISC to serve as supporting documentation.

The State of Tennessee issued 1099s to individual EPs who received EHR Incentive Payments during 2021 for either or both 2020 and 2021. The mailing occurred at the end of January.

The 1099 is an informational form that is also provided to the IRS. To determine if payments are taxable, consult your tax professional.

IRS guidelines require the issuance of Form 1099 to the EP. However EPs may be able to use a second 1099-MISC to re-assign their tax responsibility to their group practice or clinic.

The EP was responsible for selecting the appropriate option in the CMS Registration and Attestation System, whether the EP was to receive the payment or if it was to be made to a designated Payee NPI (one with which the EP had a contractual relationship). The payment may have been designated to a different entity for each year of program participation, but could not have been divided during a single year of program participation.

CMS, the Division of TennCare, and the EHR Provider Incentive Payment Program (PIPP) are not responsible for decision-making or mediation regarding the assignment of EHR Incentive Payments.

In most cases the EHR Incentive Payment itself was distributed to the group practice. When this occurs, it is the responsibility of the EP to report the payment on Form 1099-MISC to the employer or entity which bills for the EP's services. Contact your employer to obtain the tax ID number to be entered on the Form 1099-MISC.

Again, EPs are strongly encouraged to contact their tax professional on the proper handling of this matter.

EPs who lose their 1099 or otherwise need a replacement should contact F&A Accounts, Supplier Maintenance at F_A.Accounts@tn.gov. (There is an underscore [_] between the F and the A.) In your message, please provide the tax year(s) for which the 1099 is needed, Tax ID number, name, and either an email address, fax number, or current mailing address where the replacement 1099 can be sent.

Please note: F&A Accounts, Supplier Maintenance is NOT able to assist with EHR Program-related questions. Questions about the EHR Incentive program should be sent only to TennCare.EHRIncentive@tn.gov.

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Helping Your Patients Understand How to Access and Use Their Health Information

Now that you have been utilizing electronic health record technology for some time now, here's how to help your patients understand how to access and use the health information that is available for them. The USDHHS Office of National Coordinator (ONC) offers the *ONC Guide to Getting and Using your Health Records,* a unique online resource for individuals, patients, and caregivers.

The resource supports both the 21st Century Cures Act goal of empowering patients and improving patients' access to their electronic health information and the MyHealthEData initiative. The latter initiative empowers patients by giving them control of their healthcare information.

Individuals' ability to access and use their health information electronically is a measure of interoperability and a cornerstone of ONC's efforts to increase patient engagement, improve health outcomes, and advance person-centered health.

An ONC brief shows that in 2017, half of Americans reported they were offered access to an online medical record by a provider or insurer. This is up from 42 percent in 2014. Over half of individuals who were offered online access viewed their record with the past year. Eight in 10 of the individuals who viewed their information rated their online medical records as both easy to understand and useful for monitoring their health.

These positive perceptions may be attributed to individuals' varied use of online medical records, including viewing test results; managing their health needs with greater convenience; communicating with their health care provider; self-management and treatment decision-making; and contributing information to and correcting errors in their medical record.

However, challenges remain. Almost half of Americans in 2017 who were offered access to an online medical record did not access their record, frequently citing a perceived lack of need as one of the reasons for not accessing their record. Consumers may not understand their right (under the HIPAA Privacy Rule) to access their health information nor realize the benefits of accessing their health information. ONC outlined the challenges patients face in accessing their health information electronically in a June 2017 report.

"The ONC Guide to Getting and Using your Health Records" informs patients and consumers about the value of health information, and provides individuals with clear, actionable advice on how to:

- **Get their health record**, including offering tips through the process of accessing their records electronically,

- **Check their health record** to make sure it is complete, correct, and up-to-date, and

- **Use their electronic health records,** such as sharing their records to better coordinate their care and using apps and other digital technologies to better manage and improve their health.

You can help your patients learn more about obtaining and using their personal health information by directing them to this website: https://www.healthit.gov/how-to-get-your-health-record/

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Increasing Patient Engagement

Your electronic health record technology can provide patients the ability to view, download or transmit (VDT) their health information to a third party. This is typically accomplished by creating a patient portal for your patients to access.

Such a portal can be successful if it is a patient-centered and user-friendly application. Providers are strongly encouraged to gain portal experience so they can recognize the benefits and communicate them to their patients. Patient engagement can improve the quality and safety of patient care and lead to better health outcomes.

Creating a patient portal and making it available to your patients is one way to engage them, but that alone will not guarantee patient engagement. Please review the tips below and utilize the link to access the [Office of National Coordinator for Health Information Technology Patient Engagement Playbook](). This tool can help clinicians, practice staff, and administrators engage patients in their health and care using the Electronic Health Record.

Patient Engagement Tips

Educate Staff

Staff and physicians should be trained on the use of the patient portal. At minimum, training should include content and features available, user registration, procedures, troubleshooting, and privacy and security. Additionally, Eligible Providers should be trained on the content available in the portal and patient messaging capabilities.

Communicate the Portal's Benefits and Train the Consumers-Onsite Registration

Patients are more likely to use the portal if their provider recommends it. Providers should explain how access will increase the patient's involvement in care and how the patient can incorporate non-clinical data into their patient record to fill information gaps and ultimately improve clinical decision making. Placing brochures and signs in the front office can also encourage use of the portal. Onsite registration and training can help patients make the most of the tools and practice staff can describe the benefits of the portal. Patients are more likely to use a portal that is designed to address their personal needs.

Provide Simple, Secure Portal Signup[1]

Choose a portal with a quick, secure signup process that requires the patient to enter only a few pieces of information — and the portal confirms the patient's identity on the back end.

Automatic Enrollment Policy[1]

To facilitate enrollment, automatically enroll patients in a portal account instead of waiting for patients to sign up.

Consider Proxy Accounts

Proxy access is granting access to someone other than the patient. Inform patients of their right to grant access to caregivers, healthcare power of attorney and/or family members. Strategize ways to promote awareness about the availability of shared proxy access.

API Availability

Application Programming Interface (API) enables patients to access their health information in a usable way. A patient that sees multiple providers that do not share a patient portal can use APIs to store their health information in an aggregated place.

Positive Reinforcement

Acknowledge patients who use the portal. A simple "thank you" can go along way.

[1]Office of National Coordination-https://www.healthit.gov/playbook/pe/introduction/

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10 Ways to Encourage Patients To Use Your Patient Portal

Originally posted by Kathy Lewis at medigain.com on Oct. 12, 2016. © 2018 MTBC. Used by permission.

The medical office's patient portal is a valuable tool for both staff and patients. However, getting patients to use the patient portal can be a bit challenging. Many older adults may not be savvy with a computer as the younger generation. On the other hand, the younger generation may not realize the value of the patient portal. Below are 10 ways physicians and office staff can encourage patients to use the patient portal:

1. Patient portals that are hard to navigate and use will not be utilized no matter what the office staff says or does to encourage patients to use them. To make sure the patient portal is easy to use, here are some tips:

- Make the registration process quick and easy.

- Make sure all the available functions are turned on so the patient portal can be used to its fullest potential. Also make sure the physicians and staff members promptly respond to the patient's needs within the portal – such as replying to e-mails, posting lab work and other test results, and confirming appointments.

2. Once the office staff and physicians know their role, the staff will be able to explain to the patients how to use the patient portal to do the following:

- Review their test results

- Schedule appointments

- Print their lab and other reports to bring to a specialist.

3. You cannot expect patients to use something that they don't even know is available. So physicians and staff should use every opportunity to publicize the portal and the benefits it offers patients. Here are some ways to publicize the portal:

- A sign at the check-in and check-out desk

- When a patient calls the office to make an appointment or have their medications refilled.

- While on the phone with a patient, offer to help them register for the patient portal – your older patients will appreciate this gesture.

- When tests are ordered, tell them they can sign in to the portal to get their results.

4. Your office may want to make registering for the patient portal part of the sign-in process. That way while the patient is gaining access to the portal then there is also the opportunity to show the patient how to use the portal.

5. A medical office can also benefit when their patients use the portal in the following ways:

- Office staff spends less time on the phones, which allows them more time spent with the patients that are signing in or out of appointments.

- There is more time for other clerical work to be done.

- Miscommunications are less likely between the office staff and the patients.

6. Sometimes getting patients to use the portal is as simple as sending an email.

- Send each patient an email requesting they use the portal or register to use the portal. Be sure to offer your help, if they should need it.

- For patients who do not have an email send a friendly eye-catching post card.

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Medicaid EPs and EHs should submit questions about the Medicaid Promoting Interoperability (PI) Program (in Tennessee also known as the TennCare EHR Provider Incentive Payment Program) to TennCare.EHRIncentive@tn.gov;.

ALWAYS include the provider's name and NPI when contacting us. We will respond to your inquiry as quickly as possible.

Should you have issues with a CMS website, contact the QualityNet help desk for assistance at qnetsupport@hcqis.org or 1-866-288-8912.

View TennCare Medicaid EHR Incentive Program online assistance at

- Program website
- FAQs
- Acronyms & Glossary
- Previous issues of EHR Incentive News

TennCare E-Newsletters: If you choose to unsubscribe from this list at any time, you may do so by sending a message to: listserv@listserv.tn.gov, (no subject) and unsubscribe MedicaidHIT. You will receive an email confirming your removal.

10 Ways to Encourage Patients to Use Your Patient Portal...

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7. Use the patient portal as a place where patients can go to educate themselves.

- Offer a blog about health living.
- Provide easy to read short pieces about medical conditions geared towards your office's specialty.
- Provide a newsletter.

8. The portal can also be used as a place for patients to empower themselves by doing the following:

- Following their weight loss (if on a diet) .
- Follow their vital signs (if patient has borderline high blood pressure).

9. Review their medical history without having

to call and ask for copies. Patients have access to the following:

- Notes from their visits
- Doctors comments
- Vital signs
- Lab and other test results

10. Patient portal on the go – make sure your portal offers an app for the following device:

- Cell phones

There are several ways to encourage your patients to use the patient portal, you may just need to be creative.

Retrieved from http://www.medigain.com/blog/10-ways-to-encourage-patients-to-use-the-patient-portal